

Remarks

Claim Objections

On the bottom of page 4, the Office Action notes that it is unclear how “microlithographic reticle arrangement” can be used in a pellicle”. Claim 15 has been amended as follows, and now recites: A pellicle for use in a microlithographic reticle arrangement ~~for use in a pellicle~~ consisting of fluoride crystal.

Applicant respectfully believes that this claim amendment overcomes the objections to claims 15 and 16.

Regarding the Examiner’s objections in relation to Kubota set forth on page 4 of the Office Action, Applicant respectfully points out that Claim 15 recites a pellicle ... consisting of fluoride crystal. This recitation implies, through the term “consisting”, that the body of the pellicle is made of fluoride crystal. This limitation is more restrictive than “comprising”. Kubota discloses a pellicle composed of different layers, one of which may be of MgF₂. Kubota does not teach or suggest a pellicle consisting of MgF₂, which necessitates that the “body” is of this material, and that no substantial part of the pellicle is made of other material. Therefore, claims 15 and 16 should be allowable over the patent to Kubota.

Claim Rejections 35 USC 103

Claims 8, 9 and 19 are rejected under 35 USC 103 on the basis of the patent to Ito in view of Szarmes, and further in view of Ashida.

The rejected claims recite “an illumination equipment” having the feature of “in which said illumination system provides radially polarized light...” Earlier rejections and the current rejection do not recite this feature. Ito does not disclose anything about polarization. The advantages obtained through polarization are described in the specification on page 3, line 17 to

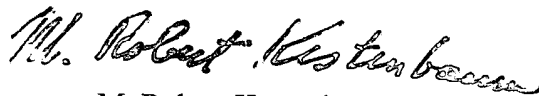
page 4, line 4 and page 6, lines 11 to 14. Consequently, the present invention should be patentable over Ito in view of Szarmes and Ashida.

A two-month extension of time in which to respond to the outstanding Office Action is hereby requested. PTO Form 2038 is enclosed authorizing charging a credit card for the prescribed two-month Large Entity extension fee of \$410. Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account 11-0665. A duplicate of this page is enclosed for this purpose.

Please note that claims 1-7, 11-14, 17, and 18 have been cancelled in this Amendment. Claims 8-10, 15-16, and 19 remain under examination. Applicant respectfully believes that these claims should be allowable, as amended.

Wherefore, further consideration and allowance of the claims in this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



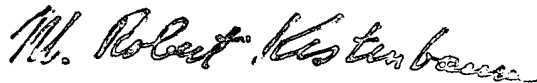
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I hereby certify this correspondence is being deposited with the US Postal Service First Class Mail in an envelope with sufficient postage to PO Box 1450, Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on August 15, 2003.



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